



Natural Resources Conservation Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd, Suite 900; Portland, Oregon 97232
Phone: (503) 414-3200 Fax: (503) 414-3276

November 24, 2006

OREGON BULLETIN NO. OR 360-2007-1

SUBJECT: PER-Absence and Leave-Hazardous Weather

Purpose: This memo transmits our policy and procedures for hazardous weather. The State Conservationist and Portland Center Directors have agreed to a single system for making decisions on office closure, delayed opening, or early dismissal decisions.

If Hazardous Conditions Develop During Normal Business Hours (7:30 am – 4:00 pm)

If hazardous weather begins during normal working hours, the State Conservationist and Center Directors or their acting will confer to decide on early dismissal or office closing. The Director, National Water and Climate Center or the acting Director will provide advice on the weather forecast and potential for increasing hazardous weather. The attached appendix provides information for the agency heads on procedural information for closing offices. Decisions on office closing or early dismissal will be announced directly to agency staffs. Prior to a decision of early dismissal or office closing, if employees feel the conditions for their drive home are too hazardous for them to stay at work, they may request annual or credit leave from their supervisor following normal procedures to leave early.

If Hazardous Conditions Develop During Non-Business Hours (4:00 pm – 7:30 am)

If weather conditions become hazardous during non-business hours, the State Conservationist and Center Directors or their acting will consult with one another to determine if the offices located in the 1201 Lloyd Building will be closed or if there will be a delayed office opening. This decision will be made prior to 6:00 am if possible. If the office is closed or if a delayed opening is in effect the NRCS Oregon State Administrative Officer will send a voicemail message using the USDA Group Distribution and also place a message on the NRCS Oregon Emergency Hotline (1-866-856-1920). Check your office phone first for messages. If you can't get through to your voicemail, call the Emergency Hotline. Note that the Hotline connects to a field office in Eastern Oregon and you must make the appropriate menu selection to hear the Emergency Hotline message.

The standard policy will be that if the roads are passable, the 1201 Lloyd Building NRCS offices will be open; however, supervisors will apply a liberal leave policy



Natural Resources Conservation Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd, Suite 900; Portland, Oregon 97232
Phone: (503) 414-3200 Fax: (503) 414-3276

when an employee feels that road conditions are too hazardous to chance a commute to the office. The decision to close the 1201 Lloyd offices will most likely only be made if conditions in the Portland Metropolitan area are so extreme that law enforcement agencies are urging that everyone stay off the roads and mass transit is shut down.

As stated above, during periods of hazardous weather, liberal leave procedures will be in effect. When liberal leave is in effect, an employee's use of annual or credit leave is assumed to be approved by the supervisor based on an employee's desire not to travel in hazardous weather conditions. However, the supervisor must be notified as soon as possible of the decision to take leave, and it cannot be granted for more than one day (8 hours) at a time.

How to Code Your Time

If the decision to close or delay opening the office is made prior to the start of the workday, according to the NRCS General Manual, employees will be granted administrative leave for the entire day, even if conditions improve and even if they are on scheduled leave. In this case, your normal workday hours should be coded as Other Leave – Admin in the WebTCAS system. If the office is closed during the course of the day and employees are dismissed early, the portion of your normal workday hours that you were absent should be coded as working hours and you should note in the comments the time period that was "excused absence due to early dismissal." Otherwise, your time absent should be coded as annual, credit, or comp leave.

The primary notification mechanisms for office closures are your office phone voice mail and the NRCS Oregon Emergency Hotline (1-866-856-1920). All employees should provide their current home telephone numbers to their supervisor but don't depend on your supervisor calling you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Graham".

BOB GRAHAM
State Conservationist

//signed//

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Newton".

BRUCE NEWTON
Director, West National
Technology Support Center

//signed//
CORY BROCKMANN
Director, West
Remote Sensing
Laboratory

PHIL PASTERIS
Acting Director, National
Water and Climate Center



Natural Resources Conservation Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd, Suite 900; Portland, Oregon 97232
Phone: (503) 414-3200 Fax: (503) 414-3276

Appendix

DIST:
E
NWCC
WNTSC
WRSL
OCIO/ITS
RD SO



Natural Resources Conservation Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd, Suite 900; Portland, Oregon 97232
Phone: (503) 414-3200 Fax: (503) 414-3276

Appendix

Procedures for Hazardous Weather Determinations

State Office and field offices in the Portland Metropolitan Area

During Normal Business Hours (7:30 am – 4:00 pm): If hazardous weather begins during normal working hours, the State Conservationist and other Agency Directors or their acting will confer to decide on the possibility of early dismissal or office closing. The Director, National Water and Climate Center or acting Director will provide advice on the weather forecast and potential for increasing hazardous weather. Decisions on office closing or early dismissal will be announced directly to agency staffs. The State Administrative Officer, NRCS Oregon, or the acting SAO will then notify the Director, West Remote Sensing Laboratory if on travel of the decision so that he may notify his contract staff. The SAO will also post the decision on the NRCS Oregon Emergency Hotline (1-866-856-1920).

Hours Other Than Normal Business Hours (4:00 pm – 7:30 am): If weather conditions become hazardous during non-business hours, the State Conservationist and Agency Directors or their acting will consult with one another to determine if the offices located in the 1201 Lloyd Building will be closed or if the office is open and late arrival is encouraged for employees and make a decision prior to 6:00 am if possible. The NRCS Oregon State Administrative Officer or acting SAO will be notified of the decision, and post the decision to close the office on the USDA Group Voicemail Box for the 1201 Lloyd Building employees and the NRCS Oregon Emergency Hotline (1-866-856-1920) and contact the Director, West Remote Sensing Laboratory. The SAO or acting SAO will also then notify the Oregon Federal Executive Board (FEB) for posting on either the OFEB website, http://www.bdiweb.org/oregon.feb.gov/ofeb_pages/ofeb_hazardousweather.htm or phone line. Decisions by the State Conservationist or Agency Director or their acting to close the state office will be based in part on the federal agency closure information provided by the OFEB and whether there has been a request by state, county or local law enforcement for drivers to stay off the roads. In addition, the other USDA agencies in the building should be consulted to determine their decisions as to closure of their offices. The standard policy will be that if the roads are passable, the 1201 Lloyd Building agencies will be open; however, supervisors will apply a liberal leave policy when an employee feels that road conditions are too hazardous to chance a commute to the office.



Natural Resources Conservation Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd, Suite 900; Portland, Oregon 97232
Phone: (503) 414-3200 Fax: (503) 414-3276

The decision to close the 1201 Lloyd USDA agencies will most likely only be made if conditions in the Portland Metropolitan area are so extreme that law enforcement agencies are urging that everyone stay off the roads and mass transit is shut down.

If the decision to shut the office due to these conditions is made prior to the start of the workday, according to the NRCS General Manual, employees will be granted administrative leave for the entire day, even if conditions improve and even if they are on scheduled leave. "Liberal leave" in cases of hazardous weather is defined as either annual or credit leave that will be assumed to be approved by the employee's supervisor due to the employee's desire not to travel in hazardous weather conditions. However, the supervisor must be notified as soon as possible of the decision to take leave, and it cannot be granted for more than one day (8 hours) at a time.

For Field Offices Outside the Portland Metropolitan Area

Decisions to close field offices are to be made by the Basin Team Leader and should be based on driving conditions and whether state, county or local law enforcement have requested vehicles stay off the road. If roads are passable, the field office should be open; however, supervisors will apply a liberal leave policy when an employee feels that road conditions are too hazardous to chance a commute to the office. If the Basin Team Leader makes a decision to close an office, they must notify the State Administrative Officer when the decision is made.

Procedures for Placing a Group Message on Shortel Voice Mail System

Sending a group Voicemail message to USDA, 1201 Lloyd employees: .While in the ShoreTel Voicemail system, Send a message press 2, Record message and press #

At the "Enter Extension or System Distribution Listing "

Enter one of the following for the group:

Group	List Number
WNTSC	2603
NRCS	2623
RD	2624
WCC	2625
WRSL	2621



Natural Resources Conservation Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd, Suite 900; Portland, Oregon 97232
Phone: (503) 414-3200 Fax: (503) 414-3276

OCIO 2622
All NRCS Lloyd Bldg 2626

For Building emergencies 2626 is the Distribution list
for WCC, OCIO, NRCS State Office, WNTSC and WRSL

**Procedures for Placing a Message on Voice Mail System for NRCS Oregon
Emergency Hotline**

- The greeting recording cannot be more than 30 seconds.
- Call the Ontario Service Center 1-866-856-1920
- When the Auto Attendant greeting begins, **PRESS 9 2 5 0**
- You'll hear the name of the mail box, "NRCS Oregon Emergency Hotline"
- The opening greeting will begin. When you hear "There are no messages ... " **PRESS 7 4 6**
- You will hear "Your standard greeting is..." **PRESS 1** to begin recording your message.
- When you're done recording, **PRESS 1**.
- You will hear "Your standard greeting is [you'll hear what you just recorded]"
- Next you'll hear "Would you like to change it?" **PRESS 1** to change it or **PRESS 2** to accept what you've recorded.
- Now you'll be prompted with "Would you like to do anything else?" **PRESS 2**
- You can hang up, you're done.